VIETNAM COURIER

Nov. 17 1969

No. 243

6th Year

Information Weekly — E.O. : 46 Tran Hung Dao Street, Hanoi — Democratic Republic of Viet Nam

PLAF Big Victories South-West and North of Saigon

PAGE 8

President Nixon Has Made No Bones of His War Continuation Scheme

— Excerpts from RSVN Provisional Revolutionary Government statement on President Nixon's Nov. 3 address —

WITH brazenly specious arguments, Mr. Nixon distorted historical facts, and insolently challenged the Vietnamese people, the American people and the peace- and justice - loving people all over the world.

As is known to all, since he took office, President Nixon has been stepping up the war of aggression in South Viet Nam, encroaching upon the sovereignty, and jeopardizing the security, of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and, at the same time, delaying the discussion of a fair solution to the Viet Nam problem, thus bringing the Paris Conference to a complete standstill.

In an attempt to win a "position of strength" on the battlefield and at the conference table, the Nixon administration said it had "de-escalated the war" while in fact, it has continued to exert "maximum military pressure". It has been repeating and even multiplying in South Viet Nam all kinds of atrocities committed by the previous administrations, pursuing the "clear-and-hold" strategy and the "pacification" program, increasing the use of B.52s, toxic chemicals and noxious gases against the civilian population and herding the people into disguised concentration camps. In short, it has indulged in countless more savage crimes against the people across South Viet Nam.

The so-called "Vietnamization of the war" program of US President Nixon is in essence a nefarious policy of using the Vietnamese to fight the Vietnamese to drag out the war of aggression, impose US neo-colonialism on South Viet Nam and perpetuate the partition of Viet Nam. The piecemeal "troop withdrawal" and the so-called program for complete withdrawal of US combat troops mentioned by President Nixon are only manoeuvres to appease the American public, cover up the scheme to keep for

(Continued page 2)

U.S. CONTINUED SETBACKS Even when on the Defensive

EARLY this year when moving into the White House, Nixon inherited from his ill-fated predecessor a "Viet Nam" legacy of gloom. The US "local war" strategy had suffered serious setbacks. More than 1.2 million GIs, mercenaries of satellite countries and soldiers of the puppet army had had to switch over from their counter-offensive strategy to a defensive one, on a country-wide scale. The war of destruction against North Viet Nam, an important part of the "local war" strategy, had come to a flop. Washington had had to abandon the hope for a "military victory" to settle the Viet Nam problem and agree to the Paris Conference. In a word, US failure was left in no doubt.

The US imperialists, however, are still unwilling to give up their aggressive design. Nixon's so-called new Viet Nam policy is nothing more than the continuation of neo-colonialist aggression in South Viet Nam. Washington has opted to "de-escalate from a position of strength" and to de-Americanize the war by stages with a triple purpose: to solve the virtually insurmountable difficulties the war has given rise to in the present state of things, limit reverses and losses and finally, achieve in a round-about way the goal it has always been pursuing, that is to maintain the Southern part of our country under US neo-colonialist tutelage.

Has Nixon succeeded in his move? A thorough examination of the situation during the past 10 months will provide the answer.

IN this period, the US Command in South Viet Nam busied itself with reinforcing its defences so as to be able to stabilize the situation on the battlefield; otherwise all its plans such as, for instance, the beefing up of the puppet administration and army, the regaining of control on populated and key strategic areas, the de-Americanization of the war, etc. would simply be inoperative.

The events did not come to pass as expected by Nixon and his Saigon team. The defence disposition they had established has been upset time and again by the PLAF offensives throughout the war zone, especially in February, May, June and constantly shaken under the impact of guerilla activities which have been extended into the very heart of Saigon.

The successes, often spectacular, of the patriots especially in Northern Quang Tri, in the Da Nang sector and the Saigon Northern perimeter running from Tay Ninh through Binh Long and Phuoc Long to Long Khanh provinces, not only exacted heavy tolls from the aggressors and the traitors, but also confronted them with serious problems. The Pentagon East—the Saigon HQ of General Abrams—, tried hard to cope with them. In the light of the following developments, it is clear that its efforts have been futile:

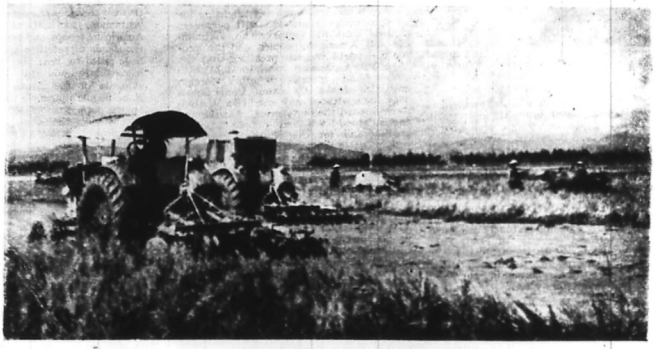
— The enemy defence belts, even at the strongest points, manned by US troops, have been breached on many occasions and at many places, even in key sectors.

— The hardest blows have come just in the areas to which the enemy has given priority in the deployment of his forces, namely, South of the DMZ (Northern Quang Tri), around Da Nang and the Saigon front.

— The enemy manoeuvre forces have been reduced sensibly because an important part of them has been either held up in a static defence (as is the case of the much-vaunted First Air Mobile Cavalry Division) or split into smaller units to be able to fight on many fronts at the same time (as is the case of the US 101st Airborne Division). The enemy command has been forced to fill the breaches opened in each area with any forces available on the spot.

— The wiping out, often in record times, of many encampments, especially on the Saigon front, as well as the launching of successive offensives by the patriots, is proof of the ineffectiveness of the enemy's main tactical trumpcards: mixed encampments (infantry, artillery and armour) serving as enclaves on the defence belts and "preventive

(Continued page 7)



Preparation for Winter-Spring crop at the Xuan Ha agricultural cooperative, Xuan Thuy village, Le Thuy district, Quang Binh province (North Viet Nam).

Mr. XUAN THUY CONTINUES COMMENTING ON Mr. NIXON'S ADDRESS

AT the 42nd session of the Paris Conference, M. Xuan Thuy, head of the DRVN government delegation, continued commenting on President Nixon's Nov. 3 address. He quoted in this connection the Nov 6 statement of the DRVN government.

The DRVN government, the DRVN representative said, considered this address "a glaring expression of the policy of war and aggression followed by the US imperialists to achieve world hegemony, play its odious role as an international gendarme, and suppress the national liberation movement. This reactionary policy runs totally counter to the general trend of the present times. It has therefore been sternly condemned by the peoples of the world who are determined to defeat it."

"The so-called change in policy on the battlefield and at the Conference table," Mr. Xuan Thuy went on referring to the same statement, "which Mr. Nixon profusely extolled simply means intensification of the war, attempts to cling on to South Viet Nam, and to prevent the Paris Conference from reaching a sound solution of the Viet Nam problem.

Exposing Mr. Nixon's misrepresentations of the origin of the Viet Nam war, the DRVN chief negotiator quoted the following from the DRVN government statement:

"The US imperialists have systematically sabotaged the Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam over the past fifteen years, they have committed troops to an aggression in South Viet Nam and bombed the DRVN. US intervention and aggression is obviously the cause of the present serious situation in Viet Nam. President Nixon's policy is to continue the war of aggression, and not to seek a political settlement of the Viet Nam problem."

Once again, Mr. Xuan Thuy, underlined the good will of the DRVN government, and its readiness to reach at the Paris Conference a solution on the basis of the 10-point overall solution advanced by the NFL and the PRG of the RSVN. But, he reaffirmed, if the Nixon administration persists in its obstinacy, the Vietnamese people are resolved to fight until their fundamental national rights have been attained. No force can shake their iron-like determination, no threat can deflect them from their lofty objectives.

President Nixon Has...

(Continued from page 1)

a long time a large number of American troops in South Viet Nam, gain time for reinforcing the puppet army and consolidating the puppet administration and use them to carry on the US aggressive and neo-colonialist scheme.

The Saigon puppet administration, a tool for aggression of the US imperialists, has been frantically opposing the withdrawal of American troops from South Viet Nam, objecting to the establishment of a coalition government in the spirit of national concord to peace ol toward really free and democratic general elections.

They have ruthlessly cracked down on all those who approve peace, independence and neutrality and want serious negotiations with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam. The fact that the Nixon administration is sticking to the die-hard reactionary and bellicose Thieu-Ky-Khiem puppet administration has further exposed the obduracy and aggressive nature of the US.

To counter the urgent and legitimate demands of millions of Americans that the US government promptly and totally withdraw American troops from South Viet Nam, US President Nixon gave a spurious picture of the situation in Viet Nam after the withdrawal of American troops. The fact is that over half a million US aggressor troops have been daily wreaking death and destruction on South Viet Nam, grossly encroaching upon the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people and seriously threatening peace and security in South-East Asia. If the US stops its aggression and brings home all American troops then all disasters and destruction in South Viet Nam will immediately end.

US President Nixon has thus made no secret of his scheme to pursue the US aggressive war in South Viet Nam, and to maintain the role of the US imperialists as an international gendarme in South-East Asia and the rest of the world. The policy of war of President Nixon is the only obstacle to a correct settlement of the Viet Nam question by peaceful means and lies at the origin of the standstill of the Paris Conference on Viet Nam. The PRG of the RSVN sternly denounces and strongly condemns the obdurate policy of aggression of the Nixon administration, which policy will surely end in failure.

Once again, the PRG of the RSVN solemnly declares: South Viet Nam must be independent and free. It is precisely for these noble goals that the South Vietnamese people have stood up to all hardships and trials and been fighting for 25 consecutive years and will persevere in their fight till victory. The Vietnamese and American peoples and the people the world over are pressing that the US end its aggression, withdraw all US troops and troops of other foreign countries of the US camp from South Viet Nam without any condition whatsoever, discard the dictatorial, warlike and rotten Thieu-Ky-Khiem puppet administration, and let the South Vietnamese people settle their internal affairs free of foreign interference. This is also the fundamental spirit and substance of the ten-point overall solution of the SVN NFL and the PRG of the RSVN.

If the Nixon administration stubbornly pursues the war of aggression in South Viet Nam, then the South Vietnamese people, in compliance with President Ho Chi Minh's last instructions, will persist in, and step up, the struggle, resolved to fight back against the US aggression till complete victory. No intimidation and perfidious move can shake the iron determination of the fourteen million South Vietnamese.

U.S. CRIMES IN NORTH VIET NAM IN OCTOBER

THE Nixon Administration continued in October its violations of the sovereignty and threats to the security of the DRVN, said a communiqué of the Committee for Investigation on US Imperialists' Crimes in Viet Nam.

In 650 sorties its manned or unmanned spy planes carried out 350 reconnaissions mainly over provinces stretching from the 17th to the 19th parallels, namely:

— Nghe An for 25 times;
— Ha Tinh — 54 times;
— Quang Binh — 100 times;
— Vinh Linh — 170 times.

The peak day (Oct. 15) recorded nearly 60 sorties.

Contrary to the shameless denial by the US Defence Department that "no bombardment took place in North Viet Nam", the Nixon government unremittingly sent tactical jets and strategic B.52s to pound at localities from Nghe An to Vinh Linh with 200 demolition bombs, 5,200 steel pellet bombs and numerous missiles or rockets in 22 raids, causing losses in lives and property to civilians:

In Nghe An: At 13.30 hours, October 5, 2 AD-6s dropped 8 demolition bombs, 2,600 round-shaped steel-pellet bombs and fired many rockets on Nam Can. On October 9 and 10, groups of T. 28s coming from Laos released 30 demolition bombs and 3,900 round-shaped steel-pellet bombs on Muong Xen township.

In Ha Tinh: At 8.30, October 20, 2 US jets coming from the direction of Cam Xuyen district, circled over Thach Ha district and fired 2 cubic-splintered *Shrike* missiles on the rice-fields of Thach Xuan village, killing buffaloes and damaging the crop.

In Quang Binh: On Oct. 17, 6 F.4s and B.26s dumped demolition bombs on an inhabited area in Tuyen Hoa district, killing or wounding 20 people working on the fields.

In Vinh Linh: On October 10, from 21.15 hours to 22 hours, and on Oct. 14, from 19.10 hours to 22 hours, US tactical jets, group after group, carried out a bombing by coordinate-reading against Huong Lap village. On October 4, 18, 19, 27 and 31, 30 sorties of B.52s, in 8 raids, carpet bombed Ra Von, Tra Vinh and A Choc hamlets (Huong Lap village) with 900 tons of explosive.

US guns from South of Ben Hai river, strafed on 22 occasions Vinh O, Vinh Loc, Vinh Giang, Vinh Quang, Vinh Thanh and Vinh Son villages in the Northern part of the DMZ with 650 shells. On October 19 along 346 shells were fired on Vinh O and Vinh Son villages.

Every day from 13 to 16 US warships cruised off the coast of North Viet Nam and carried out provocative operations, endangering the normal life of the coastal fishermen.

Hanoi Press Opinion

American Progressives Swing into Action

TO the majority of the American people, Nixon's Vietnamization of the war is not the way to end the war and save the lives of young Americans as he has promised. Because the plain truth is that if in the past five years more than half a million American troops and tens of thousands of satellite troops have failed to beat off the increasingly powerful onslaughts of the South Viet Nam people's armed forces on the puppet troops or on themselves, then how can the puppet army shift for themselves once the American expeditionary corps has withdrawn. The American people have come to realise that the Nixon plan is merely a plan for war prolongation, a further blunder, a programme to send more American youths to a senseless death in Viet Nam and to push the US still farther into the tunnel without issue. It is the way to still more serious inflation, deeper division and the revival of oppressive fascism in the US. It is a dangerous military adventure undertaken by US hard-liners who are dreaming of world hegemony, a threat to peace in South-East Asia, the Pacific and the rest of the world.

The legitimate action of the American people, just as that of the Vietnamese people, wins warm support from the whole progressive mankind. The approval given to the Fall Offensive of the American people by international organisations, prominent personalities and public opinion in various countries shows that the world's peoples highly value this struggle fought in the name of the oppressed peoples and world peace.

In committing aggression against Viet Nam, US imperialism has committed the biggest crime in our time against humanity. However, in the very heart of the US, American progressives have been holding high the banner of militancy against the war of aggression. Not only will they save the honour of the US, but they will also earn the distinction of ranking among the valiant dissenters of the biggest war of aggression in the history of imperialism.

Nhan Dan (People)
Nov. 13, 1969

"Forest in Memory of UNCLE HO"

THE young people of Thanh Hoa province, North Viet Nam, are scoring initial successes in their emulation drive to plant 7.9 million trees on bare hills by the end of this year (President Ho Chi Minh was 79 at his death two months ago).

The campaign began with the reclaiming of Ngan Nua, a 71,000-hectare bare hill area in Trieu Son district, where 3 million trees are to be planted.

In the President's memory, the Thanh Hoa youth gave Ngan Nua the name of "Uncle Ho Forest". The drive soon became a widespread movement for afforestation, drawing millions of youth and other people throughout North Viet Nam.

During his life-time, President Ho showed particular concern for tree-planting and afforestation which he said would bring more shade, wood and greenness to the country. He himself inaugurated a "Tree-planting Festival" in 1960 which triggered an unprecedented tree-planting and afforestation mass movement especially during and after the Lunar New Year Festival.

Right in the first days of national mourning early last September for the beloved President, responding to the Viet Nam Workers' Party Central Committee's appeal to turn grief into revolutionary deeds, the youth of Thanh Hoa province, in coordination with the provincial Forestry Service, launched a campaign for afforestation in memory of President Ho. They scheduled to plant 7.9 million trees by the end of 1969.

Immediately after the Thanh Hoa Committee of the Viet Nam Working Youth Union issued the appeal, nearly 4,000 young men and women offered to bring under cultivation Ngan Nua and work without pay. Braving all hardships including inclement weather, they organized themselves into work groups and began the planting program, reminding one another of Uncle Ho's teaching that "with persevering efforts, nothing is difficult."

In only ten days, they planted 800,000 trees as against the planned 300,000.

As a result, many bare hills have been covered with trees which the youths are tending under the watchword "See to the growth of every tree planted" as Uncle Ho had taught them.

A "Campaign for Tree-planting in Memory of Uncle Ho" is also underway in the suburban districts of Haiphong port city, with the participation of more than 2,000 people. Their target is at least one million trees. Within a month ended October 15, 700,000 trees of various kinds were planted in those districts.

News in Brief

● At the beginning of term (1969-70) the *Giao Duc* (Education) Publishing House put out 16 million textbooks, 300,000 of them for the improvement of the standard of the teaching body, 14 million for the teachers and pupils of pre-school classes and general education schools, two million for the pupils of complementary education schools for adults.

● On the occasion of the recent Mid-Autumn Festival, traditional festival of the Vietnamese children, the health service in Thanh Hoa province inaugurated a month of children's health. It planned to establish in the month 10,000 personal health records, and to raise the number to 70,000 by the end of this year. Under its sponsorship, 1,300 employees of creches are following a refresher course on baby farming and pediatrics.

● Since early this year, local industries and handicraft in Hanoi have been paying great attention to the making of toys. As a result, the quantity of toy-sets increased fivefold compared with the previous year. On the occasion of the recent Mid-Autumn festival, more than 100,000 traditional card-board and coloured paper toys such as unicorn heads and multi coloured lanterns of all shapes were sold.

● 5,742 writers and artists, 60% of them non-professionals, took part in the contest of art creation for children launched in 1969-1970. Among the 5,962 entries, 104 were considered for awards. They included 83 musical compositions, 63 literary works, 27 films and photographs, 11 paintings and drawings.

2,600 MDs Trained in Four Years

THE Hanoi Medical College has recently called a meeting to review its work during the past four years of struggle against the US aggressors, for national salvation.

The report delivered by Dr. Nguyen Trinh Co, assistant-director of the College, summed up the achievements obtained in that period of the US war of destruction. Professors and students were dispersed to more than 50 different localities and had to surmount innumerable difficulties to teach, learn and carry out practical work. They moreover took part in the building of class-rooms and lodgings and in production. This was for them a good opportunity to steel themselves and come into contact with the realities of life. Probation in the areas of fierce fighting greatly helped the students grasp the meaning of the watchword "Serve production, serve the fighting". Teachers and students lived and worked among peasants and soldiers to whom they disseminated elementary notions of medecine, notably prophylactic measures, helped in the improvement of local sanitary services, and gave medical care to the sick and war wounded, thus forging themselves on a double plane, moral and professional. On the other hand, scientific researches were conducted on nearly 600 subjects. The combination of Eastern medicine and Western medicine in the treatment of certain diseases was the object of sixty research works that yielded gratifying results.

In the last four years the College has trained about 2,600 doctors of medicine, that is 60% of the total of graduates from the College in the last 14 years (1955-1969). The great majority of these doctors are of worker or peasant stock or come from families of cadres, 60% of them are women.

The "May 1st" engineering works (Haiphong) is specialized in the production of machine-tools to be used in farm tool-producing workshops at district level.

On the work site of the Deo Nai coal-mine (Quang Ninh province)

Pacification in South Viet Nam: A Repeated Failure

IN the US imperialists' aggressive war in South Viet Nam military strategies have been accompanied by "pacification" programs: the Staley - Taylor plan to "pacify" South Viet Nam within 18 months (1961), the McNamara - Nguyen Khanh plan with key points (1964), the Westmoreland - Thieu-Ky two - pronged (search-and-destroy) strategy (1965-1967). "Pacification" is an outgrowth of a war conducted against a whole people, a combination of most brutal military means with most insidious methods to control the population, occupy territory and impose one's rule on a people. Of course, the outcome of "pacification" is linked to that of the anti popular war of which it is a component. In South Viet Nam the Staley-Taylor plan and the McNamara - Nguyen Khanh plan collapsed following the fiasco of the special war strategy. The general offensives and widespread uprisings of the South Viet Nam armed forces and people early in 1968 brought the attempted "pacification" of Westmoreland-Thieu-Ky to nought. And Robert Komer, the man in charge of the US "pacification" program, had to admit on leaving Viet Nam that the "pacification" program was dead and gone while himself felt like attending his own funeral (*UPI*, February 16, 1969).

THE flop of the "pacification" program after the collapse of Westmoreland's strategy caused a grave US-puppet concern. The vast liberated countryside of the NFL now encircled their towns and military bases, cut off their major communication lines while the people's power set up at all levels had swept away, or curtailed the influence of, the puppet administration. The pourparlers in Paris between the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the United States were being raised to negotiations on the Viet Nam issue in which the participation of the NFL was inevitable. As H. Kissinger, President Nixon's adviser, wrote in *Foreign Affairs* in January 1969:

"One result of the *Tết* offensive was to delay — perhaps indefinitely — the consolidation of governmental authority." Hence the number one problem for the US-puppets was to restore their control over the people. Or to quote Thieu, the Saigon puppet dictator, "One must wrest back what has been lost" (October 1968). And to serve their "clear-and-hold" strategy, Abrams and Thieu put forth an "emergency pacification program".

They hoped to root out all political bases, smash all revolutionary para-military and armed organizations of the NFL implanted in the countryside, re-establish the puppet administration at the village level together with the reactionary armed organizations and other repressive means. They intended to occupy once and for all the disputed areas, nibble at the liberated zone of the NFL, hold firm a security belt for their last redoubts in order to grab more manpower and resources for the war. They planned to pacify 1,200 hamlets within the first three months (*Newsweek* of January 6, 1969), control 89 per cent of the population by the end of 1968 and the whole people in 1969 (*Radio Saigon*, February 7, 1969).

To carry out this program, many great efforts have been made and the war machinery on the "second front" has been extensively enlarged: W. Colby has replaced Komer at the head of 5,000 American advisers from the centre down to the districts. Moreover, 1,000 puppet officers, 600 "pacification" teams and 1,000 armed propaganda teams — 60,000 men in all — have been enlisted. Wherever "pacification" team works, both mobile and occupation troops on the spot have to provide support, fielding groups or platoons to destroy revolutionary bases, control the population or move them elsewhere. Destruction raids, protracted operations, continuous encirclements, individual searches to detect bases... have been carried out in many places, typically in Dien Ban district, south of Da Nang (November 1968), at Ba Lang An, north of Quang Ngai (January 1969), etc...

However, the wave of offensives and uprisings of the liberation troops and people early in 1969 again upset US-puppet calculations. Not only were the towns and US-puppet military bases attacked and some of them wiped out, but the popular insurrections in the disputed and enemy-occupied areas erupted on a larger scale and at a higher tempo (communiqué of the PLAF Command of April 6, 1969). *UPI* of March 10 admitted, though the figures were below the truth, that in the attacks at the end of February the US-puppets lost control over 350,000 people. *AFP* revealed that the NFL had gained control over 150 hamlets south of Saigon. The *New York Times* of April 18, 1969 recognized that "pacification" had backfired in four provinces (Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Ben Tre, Dinh Tuong). In two provinces (Kontum and Phuoc Long) it had declined to such a point that the US Command had to overhaul the whole program. W. Colby himself held the result scored as very unsubstantial.

IN July 1969, the US-puppets tried to bolster the emergency "pacification" program with a "Phoenix" plan in a more frantic effort to annul the gains of the revolution. They infiltrated commando "pacification" teams dubbed "Phoenix" into the villages and hamlets to collect information, murder or kidnap cadres, destroy revolutionary bases, sow panic among the population. On the other hand, they resorted to psywar moves in an attempt to set up a puppet machinery in the countryside to cope with the deteriorating situation both on the battlefields and at the negotiating table.

But it is clear that the "emergency pacification program" like the "Phoenix" campaign elaborated in the context of the defeat of the Pentagon's limited war was far from being an active one. The last summer and autumn offensives of the Liberation troops have inflicted setbacks on the enemy. The *New York Herald Tribune* of September 12, 1969 disclosed that one or two nights of attacks sufficed to wipe out all the progress achieved by "pacification". Melvin Laird, the US Defence Secretary, himself admitted that the results of "pacification" in 1969 were only apparent.

AT present, under the leadership of the NFL and the Provisional Revolutionary Government, the armed forces and people all over South Viet Nam are struggling doggedly to wrest back their right as masters of their land and shatter all "pacification" plans of the enemy. This struggle unfolds every day, every hour in every village, every hamlet as well as in the towns.

First of all, the political action against raids, massacres, concentration and repression of the population must be mentioned. Following the powerful protest in the first half of 1969, a total count of 26,000 attendances was recorded in the drive under various forms in Gia Lai and Kontum in the third quarter. In the Mekong Delta the figure rose to 792,000. Right in the Northern part of Long An, next door to Saigon, 100,000 attendances were listed in demonstrations or actions to depose the puppet rule. From October 4 to 14, 1969, along the strategic Highway 4 (Saigon - My Tho) the people in 28 villages rose up and liberated themselves. Even in the places occupied by US-puppet troops, US-puppet sway is ineffective: the people are masters of their land, remain loyal to the revolution and carry out resistance work. Western press often reports that in the hamlets classified as "pacified" or "secure" the population keep on paying taxes to the resistance government, refusing to cooperate with the puppets or making away with local tyrants. In Dien Ban district south of Da Nang, 70,000 people manage to keep off the grip of a big force of puppets and 10,000 GIs. This explains why despite the savage terrorist raids mentioned above, the liberation troops can operate right there and attack Da Nang.

The doom of the "pacification" plan can also be seen in the loss of a series of strategic hamlets. According to preliminary reports, in the first half of 1969, 222 hamlets in Central Nam Bo were dismantled, 93 in the Western High Plateaux, 150 in Central Trung Bo, not including others in various places, and thus thousands of people were liberated.

Besides this, the local people also assault "pacification" teams and local tyrants. According to *Giai Phong* Press Agency, early in June the "pacification" teams in Long An province suffered 260 devastating onsets. In Central Trung Bo, late in June, 13 teams were harassed, and from August 6 to September 20, 21 others were wiped out. In Quang Ngai province alone, in one month 4 teams and 100 local tyrants in Ba Lang An were killed or wounded. In the Mekong Delta 28 teams were liquidated within three months in My Tho, Ben Tre, Go Cong and An Giang. Hundreds of others were swept away or destroyed during the September offensives. *AP* on August 2, 1969 revealed that the puppet colonel commanding the school of "pacification" cadres had admitted that 6,000 of them had been slain. Many were frightened out of their wits, deserted or crossed over to the people's side. The gradual disintegration of the "pacification" teams deprives the enemy of an efficient tool and compels him to entrust US combat troops — the aggressors — with the task of "winning the hearts and minds of the people."

Adverse civilian self-defence teams and para-military forces at the grass roots also receive heavy blows. In Central Nam Bo, during the first half of 1969, 8,000 of them were killed or wounded, and 170 teams were disbanded. In Can Tho, Rach Gia, Soc Trang and Tra Vinh, 70 per cent of these outfits were put out of action. In the first nine months of 1969, 1,000 teams were smashed in Long An. Following the summer and autumn drives of attacks, the civil guard and people's militia were got rid of in great numbers. The puppet administration at the grass roots collapsed for lack of protection.

The continuous emergence of revolutionary power from provincial to village levels shows that the influence of the puppet administration is dwindling and in some places even vanishing. Revolutionary structure is growing with every passing day. A US intelligence officer remarked in the *US News and World Report* of October 27, 1969 that in 1969 NFL bases continued to expand as vigorously as ever.

NIXON wants to de-escalate step by step from a position of strength: he intends to withdraw part of the US troops while putting South Viet Nam under a neo-colonialist yoke through a puppet administration at his beck and call. Apart from a plan to beef up the puppet forces, the building of a popular base for the puppet administration in the countryside, at least in some key places, is of paramount importance in the implementation of this scheme. However, if on the military plane both US and puppet troops have received severe blows, on the "second front" the "pacification" teams together with the American advisers, the armed and para-military organizations in support of the emergency "pacification" plan and the "Phoenix" campaign... have also suffered bitter setbacks. The whole scheme of the Nixon clique is going bankrupt. Would these pragmatists of the US rulers draw this logical conclusion: how out from South Viet Nam?

LIFE IN THU DUC JAIL

*— Accounts by Mrs. Bui Thi X. and Doan Thi Y., one-time detainees at Thu Duc jail * —*

THE Thu Duc jail, located in a narrow street at Thu Duc town (12km from Saigon) admist a muddy residential quarter, is originally meant for about 300 people. The number of female political and other prisoners kept there has now reached the 1,400 mark.

The US and its puppet have forced the detainees to do further construction and repair work to give the jail the attractive appearance of a show-case for foreigners.

In fact the detention wards and cells are infested with rats, bugs and mosquitoes and without sanitation facilities. No water is available and lighting is insufficient. Sometimes, a ward of 8 metres by 14 metres, too small as it is for 100 inmates, is used for up to 330 or 400. At times, as many as 100 prisoners huddle in a room 4 metres by 6 metres. Some rooms are so overcrowded that it is impossible for the detainees to lie down and they have to take turns in sitting up. Because mosquito nets is forbidden, those who sit up help keep mosquitoes off the sleeping inmates. The air is filthy to suffocation point as the two buckets serving the purpose of toilets are lidless. Usually these buckets are to be emptied every morning, but each time the detainees take an action for a better treatment, the warders retaliate by allowing clearance only once every 3 days. More often than not, the containers are overfull and the stink is nauseating. The warders themselves have to stand away from the door when it is opened because of the unbearable stench.

Dark cells are each provided with only an air hole which is a 10 x 10-centimetre gap, cut into the door serving as a peephole for the jail keepers. They are roofed with corrugated iron, and in summer, the heat is so intense that the inmates sweat profusely for 24 hours a day. The enemy call them bakehouses to intimidate the new-comers. The walls are black with the blood from bugs and mosquitoes. At night, legsize rats move on the face of the women and gnaw at the tips of their toes. The rooms are locked round the clock except when the doors are left ajar some of the time during the day for food to be brought in or the buckets to be taken away. There is not a single drop of water in the cells. Drinking water is given in small quantity only at meal time. Those who get fever cannot find water even to moisten their parched lips. There is a total lack of air and light.

The cells are even more sickening. They are painted black and each has just enough lying room for one person. They are completely bare and not a single piece of furniture is to be seen. The stink is repulsive.

In Cu Chi (South Viet Nam): Nguyen Thi Phung (center), a victim of US napalm.

Only after the persistent protest by the political prisoners at the risk of savage beatings do prison authorities issues a chamberpot. Food is utterly inadequate and poor. Only leavings and rotten food are given, because the contractors and warders pocket up to two-thirds of the outlay on food for prisoners. Worse still, to 1,400 prisoners they serve only 800 rations at most.

Medical attention is poorer still. For a 200-people ward, only about 10 are allowed to be examined everyday. It is, however, no medical examination at all. In fact, scoundrels disguised as medical men are there to distribute an Aspirin tablet to each patient as a cure-all after listening perfunctorily to his description of the symptoms. As to serious cases needing shots, a dose for one is injected into three people with the same syringe and needle.

Most savage is the mental torture.

The women are subjected to electric and water torture, beaten with whips, sticks or iron bars and confined in cells. Apart from these terror methods, they are forced to salute the enemy flag and shout anti-communist slogans twice a day. In each camp, they live in picked groups. Thugs are incorporated in each group to exert pressure or spy on the prisoners. Members of one group are not allowed to communicate with those of others be they their close relatives. The enemy deliberately seeks to sever all human relationships and turn human beings into robots. Anyone who makes even a minor claim for vital interests is termed a communist trouble-maker and is immediately summoned to the security room where she is brutally tortured, then put in a dark cell, and to a diet of rice and salt, sometime for a whole week according to the degree of "obstinacy" defined by the enemy. Sadistically enough, the prisoners are forced to attend "denounce communists" courses, that is, to sit listening to ruffians insult those who are risking their lives in the fight for national independence and against the US imperialist aggressors and their lackeys. At the monthly test, those who refuse to answer questions are summoned to the interrogation room, beaten with sticks, left without food with hands and feet tied behind their backs, not allowed a bath or a wash, or locked up in cells for weeks. Especially those who firmly refuse to salute the puppet colours and follow "denounce communists" courses, are put to continual and well devised torture which causes a slow death or are murdered en masse. Many have been kept in a "smoke" room for 6 months. It is a cell which gets all the fumes of a cooking stove. The heat is such that the women can wear underclothes only. Their skin is full of rash. Their nose and eyes are constantly irritated by the smoke. They often choke and faint. During their menstruation, they are not let out to do the washing and so have to rinse their sanitary towels with urine. At meal time, a small ball of rice is thrown in together with some grains of salt. There are neither bowls nor spoons. Half a condensed milk tin of cold water is given and the women are forced to empty it at once before it is removed. Occasionally a meal of fat and stale fish is served intentionally to give them diarrhoea. The sick women are left with no medical care so that their strength declines fast. Sometimes, it is a diet of rice peppered with sand. Broken glass is often mixed with rice. Nguyen Thi Trinh of Can Tho had both eyes seriously affected and when she left the room her sight was so bad that she often stumbled. Both her tear-ducts suppurated and her nose bled. Tran Thi Hoa's genitals got ulcerated and she is now a mere bag of bones.

In 1964, the thugs in charge of the gaol stripped the women of their clothes and put them into cells by groups of 3 or 5. Every night they drenched them with cold water several times. Those who were menstruating got haemorrhage. The cement floor was soaked with water and blood. Yet the enemy carried on for a whole week.

Unable to subdue the prisoners, the prison chief, Captain Nguyen Van Hai (later replaced by Duong Ngoc Minh) concentrated 60 inmates in the special section. After 15 days of unsuccessful coaxing, bribing and intimidation, he launched a drive of terror. He picked out 20 of the prisoners listed as "ring leaders", sent them to the police station at Hang Keo, Gia Dinh province, on route Chi Lang — Phu Nhuan. The bloodthirsty ruffians summoned Tran Quang Man, 40, Le Thi Tuyet Nhi, 24, and Nguyen Thi Quyen, 17, to the office of the police chief of Gia Dinh province. The latter and several of his aides, as sturdy as water buffaloes, pulled the women's hair backwards and punched and kicked them in their chests, abdomens, backs and genitals the whole morning until all the 3 lost consciousness. After that, the torturers dumped them into the yard with 17 others. All the women were left without food and exposed to the sun and the rain for a week, each with the only clothing they had come in. As it was June and the weather was very hot in the daytime and rainy at night, the heat and humidity was so intolerable that the 3 most heavily beaten women were in a coma. The 17 others, exhausted and badly affected by the intense heat and humidity, became completely stiff in all their limbs. But they were undaunted. In the end, the Gia Dinh police chief and the Thu Duc prison chief admitted failure and had them carried on stretchers to Chi Hoa jail.

The remaining 40 women at Thu Duc continued to receive intensified drenching and beatings. A number of them vomitted blood. Others got head injuries. Some wounded in their abdomens could not sit up. Losing all human feeling, the prison chief ordered his men to tie the women's arms behind their backs and give them nothing to eat. Protest against these atrocities spread to the whole prison camp. A week later, at mid-night, the prison was put on the alert, and in complete blackout, all the women were driven in lorries to Chi Hoa jail in an effort to placate popular anger at Thu Duc.

In mid-1966, these women and 12 others from Thu Duc were sent to the Poulo Condor island jail. In 1967, prison authorities ruthlessly cracked down on them after having failed to bring them to their knees through a harsh detention regime.

* *See* Viet Nam Courier *No* 238.

HANOI MEETING

IN SUPPORT OF AMERICAN PEOPLE'S MID-NOVEMBER CAMPAIGN

ON Nov. 12, the Viet Nam Peace Committee and the Viet Nam Committee for Solidarity with the American People jointly held a meeting in Hanoi in support of the American people's forthcoming massive demonstrations against US aggression in Viet Nam.

It was attended by large numbers of representatives of mass organisations and public offices and various social strata in Hanoi.

Also present at the Presidium were Richard J. Barnett and William Meyers of the American lawyers' delegation now visiting Viet Nam.

Speaking at the meeting, Prof. Hoang Minh Giam, Chairman of the Viet Nam Committee for Solidarity with the American people, warmly hailed the planned massive anti-Viet Nam war demonstrations of the American people, and expressed the Vietnamese people's support for and solidarity with the latter in their demand for the immediate and total withdrawal of all US troops from South Viet Nam.

He condemned the Nixon administration for obdurately protracting the war, maintaining the rotten puppet Thieu-Ky-Khiem administration, suppressing the American people's struggle against the US aggressive war in Viet Nam, thereby thwarting the aspirations and interests of the American people. He continued: "The Vietnamese people demand that the US stop its war of aggression, withdraw rapidly and completely its troops and those of the other foreign countries in its camp from South Viet Nam without laying down any condition, cast off the puppet administration and let the South Vietnamese people settle by themselves their own affairs without foreign interference."

He also reaffirmed the Vietnamese people's determination to fulfil President Ho's last instructions and to fight on to defeat the US aggressors completely and win back their fundamental national rights.

Speaking next, Richard J. Barnett and William Meyers expressed the American people's solidarity with the legitimate effort of the Vietnamese people and urged an immediate and complete withdrawal of US troops from South Viet Nam. They affirmed that the Vietnamese people's resistance to the US war was also consistent with the aspirations and interests of the American people.

The participants unanimously adopted a resolution pledging support for the Fall Offensive of the American people.

LETTER *to American Friends*

Dear friends,

NO Vietnamese could help feeling moved by your courageous challenge to the Nixon administration, urging it to remove its engine of death from the Southern part of our country. Though there is some dozen thousand kilometers between us, you have not let yourselves be duped, you have seen the truth and have decided to act. Please accept our sincere thanks. As we, Vietnamese, will never forget Nguyen Van Troi, the brave young man of South Viet Nam who has laid down his life for the country, we will also be for ever grateful to Norman Morisson who made his own body a blazing torch of truth.

Not long ago, an American woman writer of genius and courage told me: "Today's America is the bastion of imperialism. We can hardly love an America ruled by manslaughterers. Moreover, in our America, those who are frequently invoking the Fatherland are precisely those who are bombing you in Viet Nam. So, is it not true that your duty is to defend your Motherland, and ours, to defend justice?"

My dear fellow writer, To Huu, a well-known poet of ours, once said,

"We are fighting for our own thirty millions,
And also for the three thousand millions in this world..."

In defending our Vietnamese Motherland, we are actually defending this one principle, this one justice common to all countries, to all peoples, to all human values: "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" (from President Ho Chi Minh's message).

And you, when you are fighting for justice you are acting like Americans who love America most. Silent patriots, you may be sometimes though, but true patriots who show your love for America with your own deeds. It is you and none other who ardently love and are jealously preserving the honour of America, who do not tolerate the American flag to be stained by the butchers. It is you who most treasure the blood of hundreds of thousands of young Americans and do not want to see it squandered by the Washington rulers. You are genuine patriots because your hearts are burning with the glowing ideal of liberty and democracy upheld by Lincoln and Whitman.

The rulers in the United States must be made to know that the era of the slave trade and the massacres of Indians which occurred several centuries ago is gone, that the world today is no longer a preserve of the imperialists, that the latter can no longer freely dispatch troops to whatever place and station them for as long as they like and to decide whether or not to withdraw their troops, by listening only to the dictates of their immeasurable greed!

Mr. Nixon said that to withdraw troops precipitately would hurt the prestige of America. He sounded exactly like a robber who contends that to cease robbing would damage his image! Another kind of prestige Mr. Nixon is refusing to cast off and instead is holding fast to, is the ragtag regime of the Thieu-Ky-Khiem puppets.

Mr. Nixon also advanced the absurd argument that to "withdraw" from Viet Nam today would mean that the sons of the American people would have to fight tomorrow in many other places in the world. What ethical norm gives him the right to impose his will outside the borders of his country? Who does he think he is to use the territory of other countries, the land of other nations to realize his dream of world hegemony?

Having failed in his peace hoaxes, Mr. Nixon reverted to his habitual fire-eater's language to threaten us. We Vietnamese cherish peace as much as, if not more than, any other people, because in the course of our millenary history we have had to fight too many wars in self-defence. But it must be a genuine peace, a peace in honour where man can go about with his head erect, not bent. President Ho Chi Minh has said in his last message:

"The resistance war against US aggression may drag on. Our compatriots may have to face new sacrifices in property and life. Whatever may happen, we must keep firm our resolve to fight the US aggressors till total victory.

Our rivers, our mountains, our people will always be.

The American aggressors defeated, we will build a country ten times more beautiful."

We are firmly resolved to carry out this sacred direction of our venerated leader. In the course of our four thousand-years-old history, we have had many opportunities to compare the price of peace and that of war. But we also know which is costlier in terms of human lives, freedom or slavery. Once we lost a mere time two and a half million lives without making any wars. They died of famine and in slavery because we had no guns, no sovereignty.

Well, let Mr. Nixon not try to cow us. He once declared: "Now that we have landed on the moon, there is nothing on the earth we cannot do." But let us remind Mr. Nixon that the moon-landing was the result of the work of scientists. It was not the product of the brain of Mr. Nixon who has always schemed to rule the world with his weapons and dollars. Let him not misuse the Moon. It is not a forum for him to intimidate humanity from. It has not saved America from the housing shortage, gold flight, unemployment and race conflicts. Neither can it be a magic wand to keep American soldiers from falling into spike traps in Viet Nam.

With 35 billion the US has succeeded in putting man on the moon. But after spending 180 billion in South Viet Nam the US imperialists finally have had to recognize the necessity of withdrawal. The moon trip is a straight one but the road to Viet Nam is tortuous and soaked with American blood; and on it, the flag and honour of America have got smeared, and in the end, it has been proved that there is no alternative but to pull out. If Mr. Nixon does not understand or refuses to understand these things, we the Vietnamese people, the American people, will get him to understand, the sooner the better, because even now it is already too late for him.

Dear friends, in a letter I sent you five years ago I wrote:

"No, it isn't Edgar Poe who has driven us behind strategic barbed wire tangles,
Neither is it Lincoln who has dumped incendiary one thousand pounders on human faces,
Nor Whitmen who has fired cannons for 1,000 nights on end.
Nobody here confounds assassins and Spring."

You are the Spring of America. You, the patriots, are the vocal and active majority: you are pushing forward, crushing and throwing into the shade the murderers, you are saving America with your gallant and just actions.

CHE LAN VIEN
Vietnamese poet

IN THE UNITED STATES

AMERICANS FIGHT AGAINST VIET NAM WAR

● American servicemen at **Fort Hood base** including GIs returning from Viet Nam were among some 2,000 participants in the anti-war march in Houston streets, Texas, on November 10, a New York report said.

At a meeting held during the march, Doctor Howard Levy, one of the first Americans to come out against the US aggression in Viet Nam and to refuse to train American "Green Berets" operating in Viet Nam, scored US policy in Viet Nam as hypocritical and called for an early halt to the Viet Nam war.

● More than 1,200 students of the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** on Nov. 6 staged a demonstration against the US war of aggression and the use of the Institute's personnel and laboratories to fill war orders. They urged that the Institute's authorities immediately put an end to secret scientific researches for military purposes.

● American anti-war organizations recently published in the *New York Times* four advertisements calling on the paper's readers to take part in the three-day "Moratorium" (November 14-15) and demonstrations for an immediate end to the war of aggression in Viet Nam and withdrawal of all US troops from South Viet Nam, it is learned from Western reports.

● The advertisement put up by the **Student Mobilization Committee**, one of the several organizations sponsoring the march on Washington this week-end to protest the war, listed the names of 1,465 active duty servicemen including 183 men currently stationed in South Viet Nam.

"We are 1,365 active duty servicemen," the statement accompanying the list of servicemen said. "We are opposed to American involvement in the war in Viet Nam."

"We resent the needless wasting of lives to save face for the politicians in Washington. We speak, believing our views are shared by many of our fellow servicemen. Join us in Washington November 15 to bring all the GIs home now," the statement added.

● A group of Medical and Dentistry students from the **New York University School of Medicine** said, "As Americans, we call on our Government to stop the slaughter. One more life lost in Viet Nam is one too many."

U.S. Continued Setbacks...

(Continued from page 1)

operations" conducted in sectors susceptible of doing the duty of staging areas for a next attack.

ON the other hand, to create conditions favourable for a «de-escalation from a position of strength» and a phased de-Americanization of the war, on order from Nixon, Abrams has been after the following objectives: to keep down US casualties, to beef up the puppet troops and to weaken the adversary by exerting maximum military pressure on the battlefield (while in Paris, Cabot Lodge calls for mutual troop withdrawal from South Viet Nam). Different measures have been taken to this end:

First of all, massive use of fire and air power and large-scale involvement of the mechanized forces, especially armoured cars. According to American sources, since the beginning of this year up to mid-August, giant B 52 strategic bombers based in the Pacific and Thailand alone had dumped on South Viet Nam a bomb tonnage bigger than that released by US tactical and strategic aircraft during the whole of 1968.

On the other hand, military draft has been stepped up in order to increase the puppet army somehow or other, while numerous operations have been launched by the US command to create this "maximum military pressure."

Nevertheless, the enemy losses have not the least been cut, and well nigh 100,000 men, including 170,000 GIs have been knocked out since the beginning of this year. The figures released by the enemy command and reproduced by the press reveal that under Nixon the US casualty rate has risen by 30 per cent compared with the Johnson time

The puppet armed forces have to some extent been replenished with civil defence men but have become even more heterogeneous and consequently the quality of the fighting men has been declining. More than 70 per cent of them are "rookies", hastily trained. The puppet armed forces have suffered particularly serious losses in the places of tests on de-Americanization, for instance in the Dakto area, Western High Plateaux, in LongKhanh to the Northeast of Saigon and in the Mekong Delta. On Oct. 4 last, *AP* acknowledged this fact and noted that the Allied casualty toll showed that puppet battle fatalities were on the upgrade, in particular during the last 4 months when the US command put emphasis on the "Vietnamization of the war."

The Utopian character of the attempt to "maintain maximum military pressure" on the patriots is only too transparent, especially following the famous misadventure encountered by US troops at A Bia last May; Hamburgher Hill remains a nightmare which keeps haunting both the fire-eating generals and the poor GIs in South Viet Nam, so much so that Abrams is now talking about a new, much more modest, formula: "protective reaction".

These failures have jeopardized the implementation of the programme for de-escalation from a position of strength, a life buoy launched by Nixon to save the US undertaking in Viet Nam from total bankruptcy.

Nixon would like to hold the initiative of this de-escalation as if his aggressor troops had not been irremediably beaten. Yet the truth is a completely different picture, witness of Nixon's braggadocio around the US troop cut-backs to be operated by the end of this year. One still remembers that on June 19 last, in an effort to dodge the criticism from the former Pentagon Chief, Clark Clifford, Nixon declared he hoped the number of GIs to quit Viet Nam (alive) before Christmas would surpass the 100,000 mark suggested by Johnson's Defence Secretary. Yet, in the long run, it is a total of 60,000 men that has been decided, on two occasions, by the White House.

Nixon's impasse can be explained by the following facts:

Firstly, the puppet troops can never be reinforced as Nixon has expected.

Secondly, the latter's "peace package" in diplomacy can no longer fool anybody and is thus incapable of helping his war plan.

Thirdly, the difficulties, far from being removed, are accumulating on his way. Time is against him and the discontent of the American people who oppose the Viet Nam war is mounting with every passing day.

What is the present picture of the battlefield after 9 months since Nixon's inauguration?

First of all, driven onto the defensive, the US imperialists have further lost the initiative, seen their positions grow weaker and exposed more flaws in their plans, both military and political.

Next, even on the defensive, the effectiveness of the US-puppet troops remains desperately poor.

Mention should also be made of a fact, very serious, concerning the morale of the GIs which has been fast sinking as the unjust war they have to fight drags on.

Lastly, there is the rapid increase in the already heavy losses of the puppet troops, and such a development really interferes with Washington's "Vietnamisation of the war".

In the opposite camp, the ranks of the patriots, far from weakening, have been strengthened both quantitatively and qualitatively. The NFL and the Provisional Revolutionary Government have been enlisting ever stronger popular support at home, in the occupied and liberated areas as well, and abroad. With this in view, *AP* on June 14 last commented that the VC have shown they can fight the war for another 30 years.

Everything tends to affirm that Nixon has not the least succeeded in shoring up the criminal undertaking of the US imperialists in Viet Nam, in spite of some strategic and tactical changes and reductions of the war objectives by the new Republican administration.

Unable to win after having geared up the "formidable" US war machine, how can the US aggressors avert defeat once on the defensive all along the line?

PLAF fighter ready to pound an enemy position.

The Fight on the Educational Front

TO develop education in the liberated zone is an arduous task rendered even more so by enemy systematic sabotage. Nevertheless, revolutionary power has obtained remarkable sucesses in this domain.

Wherever the population decides to stay, schools are opened and education continues to be supplied, people will say. And they are right. Because, for all his efforts to destroy schools and massacre the teachers and students in the liberated areas, the enemy can never break the people's will to learn.

Once in My Tho province, after having detected a class-room, the US-puppets trained 2,500 shells on the site then sent in helicopters in an attempt to kidnap teachers and pupils. But thanks to high vigilance and especially to a careful plan to provide against such dangers, school mistress N.T. succeeded in taking to safety all her forty pupils before the enemy arrived.

In Can Tho province, during the past school-year, the puppets destroyed hundreds of class-rooms and took away all the furniture. But the population built new class-rooms and classes resumed immediately after the enemy's departure.

In Hiep Phu and Hiep Thanh, Binh Thuan province agents of the US-puppets moved the schools to near their posts, arrested the teachers and compelled the pupils to attend classes opened by themselves where they were taught syllabuses of the Saigon administration. The population protested vigorously and after a persevering struggle succeeded in getting the release of the teachers. Then classes reopened to the satisfaction of all.

Village T.P., Long An province, lies along the strategic highway No. 4 in an area dotted with enemy posts. "Mop-ups" were frequent. However, classes functioned regularly thanks to a careful dispersion plan and very efficacious measures of civil defence. Likewise, the schools have been operating smoothly in the "contested zones" of Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Ben Tre and many other provinces.

Owing to all these efforts of the population and especially to the leadership of the people's power, the South Viet Nam liberated zone today boasts tens of thousands of general education schools for the children and complementary courses for adults. In many provinces like My Tho, Tra Vinh, Ca Mau, Can Tho and Rach Gia, enrolments for the 1968-1969 school-year increased by from 50% to 100% compared with the previous year.

The fight against illiteracy has also brought promising results. Such villages as Hoai Chau and Hoai Thanh (Binh Dinh province) or Binh Chau and Binh My (Quang Ngai province) have been recognized as completely rid of illiteracy. Other villages in Quang Nam and Kien Tuong provinces will have completed their literacy programs by the end of this year.

Complementary education has expanded at a particularly quick pace. It is being carried out in very diversified forms for the adult population of different occupations and different ages: peasants, cadres in the public offices of the people's administration, organisations of the NFL and mass organisations, member of the PLAF, voluntary war supplies carriers, members of the Young Volunteers Brigade, etc...

One of the most outstanding achievements in the liberated zone is education afforded to the populations of national minorities. In central Trung Bo, several teachers' schools have been created to train teachers of various national minorities. The scripts of the Bahnar, Rade, Re and other minority peoples elaborated by the educational service are being used as teaching media in the areas inhabited by these peoples. Other scripts are being studied with a view to enabling the national minorities to learn in their own languages alongside the Quoc Ngu, the standard Vietnamese language.

There have been many stirring examples of the love for study among the national minorities. In some villages of Gia Lai province, one out of every four inhabitants is attending school. In Bac Ai district, the ratio is higher still: two out of every five. The populations of the Western High Plateaux said they could go without food, salt but not without education. And they have in fact overcome all difficulties and carry on their learning.

Remarkable has been also the active participation of teachers and pupils, not only in the political struggle for the protection and development of education but also in the armed fighting against the enemy. Nguyen Cuong, a teacher in Quang Ngai for example, has, while teaching his pupils, taken part in many actions, having to his own credit 25 soldiers of Pak Jung Hi mercenaries. Like him, other teachers and even many pupils have been honoured "Valiant Fighter".

MILITARY OPERATIONS

PLAF BIG VICTORIES South-West and North of Saigon

⊙ **AT XEO RO (Close to Thailand Gulf):**

700 Enemy Casualties Reported, a Puppet Brigade HQ Destroyed, 5 Cannons Rendered Unserviceable and 15 Vessels Sunk or Burnt in a Violent Night Attack (Nov. 5).

⊙ **BU PRANG — DUC LAP SECTOR:**

1,400 Adverse Troops Put out of Action, 16 Artillery Pieces Destroyed or Captured Intact, 31 Planes and Helicopters Shot Down in 10 Days Ending Nov. 6.

⊙ **IN BU DOP:**

500 US-Puppets Wiped Out, 12 Planes and Helicopters Downed in 6 Days Ending Nov. 8.

IN the first 10 days of November, fighting was intense up and down the war zone, from South of the DMZ to the Mekong Delta. Particularly, 3 major battles took place respectively in the Duc Lap — Bu Prang sector (208km Northeast of Saigon), Bu Dop (130km North of Saigon) and the Xeo Ro area, Rach Gia province (Mekong Delta).

Xeo Ro: On the night of Nov. 5, the PLAF made a surprise attack on the HQ of a puppet marine Brigade and various encampments of this brigade along Xeo Ro canal (200 km Southwest of Saigon), Rach Gia province. They controlled the situation in this sector throughout the night of Nov. 6 after the destruction of the brigade HQ, killing a major and a captain, wounding the Brigade deputy commander, demolishing a fire-base of five 105-mm howitzers, inflicting heavy losses on an encampment of battalion 6, and wiping out the CP of Battalion 6, as well as 4 infantry companies, a riverine task group and a signal company. 700 enemy troops were put out of action. The PLAF sank or burnt 15 river craft.

Between Nov. 2 and Nov. 8, regional troops and guerillas fought in co-ordination with Liberation fighters, knocked out another 180 enemy soldiers around Xeo Ro. On the night of Nov. 6 and on the early morning of Nov. 7, the PLAF operating in Ben Tre, My Tho, An Giang, Kien Tuong and Kien Phong (Mekong Delta) mounted simultaneous assaults on hundreds of enemy positions (including 12 military subsectors and 2 military sectors), 2 airfields, a base camp of the puppet 7th Division, and 2 battalion CP's. Liberation troops destroyed many encampments of the said division; 4 security forces companies were either written off the muster-roll or decimated and 4 aircraft shot down. Particularly in My Tho and An Giang the PLAF disabled 600 adverse troops.

Bu Prang - Duc Lap: From the night of Oct. 28 to the early morning of Nov. 6, the PLAF made successive shelling and ground attacks on a string of enemy positions around Duc Lap district town (208 km Northeast of Saigon) and in the Bu-Prang area (40km Southwest of Duc Lap).

— Between Oct. 28 and Nov. 2, the PLAF unleashed artillery barrages then launched ground assaults on 3 US fire-bases respectively 4 km South of Bu Prang, 10 km Southwest of Bu Prang and 30 km Southwest of Duc Lap, forcing the Americans to flee from the area. The Liberation fighters overran the bases, virtually wiping out all 3 artillery CPs and gunners, capturing 6 105mm and 155mm howitzers along with dozens of tons of ammunitions intact, and destroying 9 other 105mm and 155mm guns.

— Between Nov. 2 and Nov. 5, the PLAF engaged elements of puppet Ranger Battalion 11 and Battalion 1 of puppet Regiment 53 on relief missions for the battered troops, inflicting heavy casualties on 7 companies of these 2 battalions.

— On Nov. 5 the PLAF made a violent overnight surprise attack on the HQ of puppet Regiment 45 in Duc Lap district town, doing heavy damage to this regimental HQ, putting out of action more than 100 enemy soldiers (including a regiment commander), burning 17 military vehicles and 7 blockhouses, and destroying one cannon and many outhouses.

According to preliminary reports, in the period under review, the PLAF of Darlac put 1,400 adverse troops out of action around Duc Lap and Bu Prang, seized 134 weapons (including 6 105 mm and 155mm howitzers), destroyed 10 other howitzers and 39 military vehicles, blotted out 40 outposts and blockhouses and dozens of outhouses, shot down or destroyed 31 aircraft of different types, and inflicted heavy losses on the HQs of Regiments 53 and 45, puppet Division 23, puppet Ranger Battalion 11 and Battalion 1 of puppet Regiment 53. Fighting was still going on in this sector. On Nov. 10, a puppet Ranger company was seriously mauled and 2 choppers were grounded.

Apart from these battles, on the night of Nov. 5 the PLAF and regional troops penetrated Ban Me Thout city and raided the city airfield and radio station and several outposts, causing losses to the enemy.

On Nov. 5 and Nov. 6, the PLAF and regional troops of Kontum made a thrust into the city and rushed a mixed US fire-base 34 km Southeast of Pleiku, killing or wounding 300 enemy troops and burning 40 houses in a billeting area, 4 ammo dumps, a military vehicle compound and an artillery site.

Earlier, on Nov. 3, regional troops destroyed 36 US tanks and armoured personnel carriers and more than 100 escorting troops in 4 ambushes on Highway 14 (Ban Me Thuot — Duc Lap) and Highway 18 (Kontum-Pleiku).

Saigon's Northernmost Sector: Between Nov. 3 and Nov. 8, the PLAF kept up the pressure on the enemy inside and outside the Bu Dop military sub-sector (130 km North of Saigon) through surprise attacks, shelling, ambushes on road convoys and interception of enemy reinforcements. They inflicted heavy losses on a base camp of the US First Air Cavalry Division, putting over 100 GIs out of action, destroying 8 105mm and 155 mm guns and 4 M.113s, and burning 2 fuel and munition depots. Liberation gunners neutralized an enemy fire-base and a landing strip of Bu Dop airfield, destroying 5 aircraft and 2 105mm howitzers. In separate ambushes on 2 enemy convoys, the PLAF destroyed 20 M113s along with 100 men on board as well as 2 US-puppet ranger companies, and shot down 7 choppers.

All told, in this period, the PLAF of Phuoc Long put 500 US-puppets out of action in the Bu Dop area, destroyed 10 105mm and 155mm howitzers, 24 military vehicles and many outhouses and shot down or destroyed 12 helicopters.

Fighting was still in progress around Bu Dop. On the night of Nov. 10 alone, the enemy command admitted that 90 soldiers were killed or wounded, 7 military vehicles destroyed, 6 helicopters shot down and many other aircraft damaged (including one C.130 transport.)

SAIGON REGIME *under Fire*

OVER the recent days, the Thieu - Ky - Khiem ruling junta in Saigon has run into growing opposition from the public because of its anti-popular policies, Western news agencies reported.

AFP said on November 9 that the Saigon Association of Students representing 14 Saigon University faculties, strongly attacked recent tax increases. It petitioned for a people's referendum "in order to ascertain the true feeling of the people on new tax rises". Ly Chanh Trung, Professor of Literature, stated that there had been popular discontent with the measures. So long as the Thieu - Ky - Khiem regime persists in sticking to one million US and mercenary troops, its economic problem will remain insoluble, he said.

Earlier, on Nov. 5, the Saigon Lower House approved a bill seeking cancellation of the new tax hikes. According to *Reuter*, at a session on Nov. 7, these again came under fire and a motion of non-confidence in both the Tran Thieu Khiem cabinet and President Thieu was tabled. One deputy urged that Thieu be put to trial at the Supreme Court. The Secretary General of the Lower House said he would table a bill calling for a national referendum to decide whether the people still supported Thieu. If they did not he should step down. Tran Thien Khiem had had more than once to appear before the Senate to give clarifications on his cabinet's decision. However, most Senators declared dissatisfaction with the explanations and demanded reconsideration of the decree.

Meanwhile, different factions kept showing their hostility to Thieu. A *UPI* dispatch on Nov. 10 quoted retired General Duong Van Minh, leader of the 1963 military coup which had ousted Ngo Dinh Diem, as saying in an interview with the US *Newsweek* magazine that the Thieu administration "is unrepresentative".

He described the mood of Saigon today, a something "like a lake. On the surface it seems very calm, but beneath strong currents are seething. Saigon Buddhist circles announced a "people's congress" toward the end of this month to "prepare the faithful for political struggle and to seek peace." This move has been suggested by Minh who also challenged Thieu that as things went, he would enter the 1971 presidential race with Thieu.

According to *AFP* on Nov. 12, newspapers in Saigon incessantly scored the Thieu administration as unrepresentative and "legal only in form" (*Chanh Duo*), or "merely pursuing personal aims beneficial to a political minority" (*Cong Luan*), or called for a plebiscite for Thieu to step down if he loses (*Voice of the Nation*).

On the same occasion, lawyer Tran Ngoc Lien, a pro-Buddhist and pro-Minh personality, at a news conference also rated Saigon rulers as "heartless for "seeking selfish interests" and for having caused "the situation of South Viet Nam (Saigon) to worsen at a frightening rate, the social structure to break down,... human and civil rights to be flouted,... the economy to decline... and national reputation to be smeared."

Remarkably enough, various strata of the urban people have taken strong actions against Thieu's tax increases They have resorted to many methods. Recently, a congress of 1,000 representatives of Lambretta motocyclecabs drivers insisted that the Thieu-Ky-Khiem regime abolish tax rises on petrol and oil.

These confrontations forced the dictators to back down. They reportedly had to lift tax increases on some items of goods such as petrol and oil. *AFP* said on Nov. 12, that Thieu agreed to consider the possibility of submitting to Congress the economic measures he had arbitrarily carried out without any consultation with it. The Information Ministry of the puppet administration, for its part, had to let newspapers run news reports and articles critical of the Thieu regime, contrary to its previous effort to gag the press.

Index 1262— Printed in Hanoi—Signed for printing on November 15, 1969